

Maryland SHIP "Health Action" Newsletter

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Maryland Health Quality Portal



The Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene has a valuable new online resource. The Maryland Health Quality Portal website contains information on health insurance plans, hospitals, long-term care facilities, physicians, and allied health professionals in Maryland. Available resources range from searchable databases to information about policy changes. Maryland residents can compare private health plans on key quality measures and member satisfaction and get additional information published by the Maryland Health Care Commission. Access to the Medicaid HealthChoice Plan Performance Report allows individuals to compare Medicaid managed care plans based on access to care, doctor communication, child health, and more. The long-term care section provides information on planning and paying for long-term care, including information on living at home. The portion of the website dedicated to hospitals offers a Maryland hospital performance evaluation guide. The online portal also provides a practitioner profile system and a Medicare physician compare system. The information is intended to help consumers make more informed decisions about health care.

For more information, visit the Maryland Health Quality Portal website [here](#).

View the [SHIP measure](#) and [tools](#) for improving access to care.

Affordable Care Act Navigators Improve Access to Care

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This fall, thanks to the Affordable Care Act, millions of Americans will have a chance to purchase health coverage in the much anticipated insurance marketplace. In January, many others will be newly eligible for Medicaid coverage. To help consumers understand all their new options, a formal "navigator" program and other in-person assistance programs are being created designed to help consumers enroll and learn about how to access care under their new coverage. Organizations and health entities can apply to become formal navigators and educate and guide consumers through their application processes.



To ensure the program improves access to care for all Americans, the American Public Health Association submitted comments this week on the proposed rule outlining new standards for Navigators and other assistance personnel. In its letter to the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, APHA expressed its support of many of the new standards, and offered recommendations for strengthening some. Among the requirements, navigators must achieve certain training standards such as being equipped to provide culturally and linguistically appropriate services to their consumers, and maintaining knowledge about racial, ethnic, and cultural groups in their area. "We urge CMS to broaden the scope of required knowledge, to add at least disability, gender and sexual orientation," wrote APHA's executive director Georges Benjamin, MD.

Earlier this year, the administration announced that approximately \$332 million in fiscal year 2013 funding will be reallocated from the Prevention and Public Health Fund to support the navigators and other outreach and enrollment efforts. The grant application deadline for prospective navigators is June 7.

For more information, visit the website [here](#) and search for CFDA # 93.750.

View the [SHIP measure](#) and [tools](#) for improving access to care.

Health Care Reform and Non-Profits Conference



Are you a non-profit serving Howard County? Then you won't want to miss the Maryland Women's Coalition for Health Care Reform's upcoming conference "Health Care Reform and Nonprofits: A New Prescription!" The conference is being held on May 21, 2013 from 8:30am - 3:00pm at the Ten Oaks Ballroom in Clarksville, MD. No matter what your knowledge level of the Affordable Care Act, the program is tailored to bring you the most critical and up to date information on not only the health of Howard County, but also the state of health care reform implementation in Maryland. You will hear from leading experts from the Howard County Health Department, Governor's Office of Health Care Reform, the Maryland Health Connection, Healthy Howard - Howard County's new Connector Entity, the Coalition and others who can answer questions and discuss the challenges Howard County nonprofits face. Health care reform implementation is coming soon, so make sure you are ready.

Click [here](#) to register.

If you aren't a nonprofit that serves Howard County residents, but are interested in developing a similar program in your own community, or if you have any questions about "A New Prescription," please contact the Coalition by emailing [Sandy Kick](#).

For more information, visit the Maryland Coalition for Health Care Reform website [here](#).

New Report Provides Health Data and Resources for Asian and Pacific Islander Community



Minority Health and Health Disparities

Maryland Department of Health & Mental Hygiene

The Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DHMH) has released a new report, "Asian and Pacific Islanders in Maryland: Health Data and Resources," the first in a series to raise awareness of health conditions and provide educational resources for minority populations in the state. The report's release coincides with Asian-Pacific American Heritage Month.

The Asian/Pacific Islander population is one of the fastest growing groups in Maryland and across the country. The 2012 Census showed that between 2000 and 2010, the Asian/Pacific Islander population increased in Maryland by 51 percent, from 213,232 to 322,010.

The new report highlights several troubling health disparities. For example, Asians and Pacific Islanders in Maryland were 2.8 times more likely to die from stomach cancer than Whites, and 1.6 times more likely to die from liver cancer than Whites. Non-Hispanic Asians in Maryland were 1.4 times more likely to be without health insurance and unable to afford to see a doctor, than their Non-Hispanic White counterparts. Asian or Pacific Islander women were 1.2 times more likely than White women in Maryland to receive late or no prenatal care.

"This report sheds light on the health status of one of Maryland's rising minority communities," said Dr. Joshua M. Sharfstein, DHMH Secretary. "Knowing their challenges, we can work to improve outcomes with targeted resources and guidance."

Asian/Pacific American Heritage Month is a celebration of the culture, traditions, and history of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders in the United States. DHMH is recognizing this month by raising awareness of disparities and engaging in health education and promotion among the Asian/Pacific Islander community in Maryland. The Department plans to develop and release reports this year focusing on Hispanic, American Indian and African American health disparities.

For information about the work of the DHMH Office Minority Health and Health Disparities, visit their website [here](#).

To read the full report report, click [here](#).

View more information about disparities on the SHIP website [here](#).